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Silicon Valley in Transition: Tech Job Growth Poses Both Opportunities and Challenges for the Valley

Silicon Valley's technology cluster is emerging from recession into a new period of growth and opportunity, according to a comprehensive study completed for four Silicon Valley workforce investment boards. Interviews with key executives indicate a 15 percent jump in high skill jobs over the next two years confirming the recent news of hiring by Google, Facebook and other Valley tech companies.

"To make the most of these opportunities, job seekers must adapt to changes in what employers want by demonstrating increased flexibility and the ability to work as part of a team to remain relevant in the future workplace", said Stephen Levy, director of the Palo Alto-based Center for Continuing Study of the California Economy (CCSCE) and an author of the study.

"And the Valley faces enormous challenges to provide great schools, world-class infrastructure and a high quality of life so that talented entrepreneurs, workers and their families will want to live and work in Silicon Valley," he said.

Based on 250 employer surveys and over 50 executive interviews, this research study provides a roadmap for Silicon Valley's efforts to address workforce changes and competitive challenges. The study – *Silicon Valley in Transition: Economic and Workforce Implications in the Age of iPads, Android Apps and the Social Web* – proposes a number of recommendations for better preparing and connecting job seekers with available employment opportunities and for Silicon Valley to maintain its dominance as the world's preeminent innovation factory.

To compete for future tech jobs, job seekers will need to:

- Demonstrate entrepreneurial skills, flexibility, adaptability and a passion for life-long learning in addition to relevant technical skills.
- Shift their resume and job search strategies to focus on their experiences helping previous employers solve problems and innovate.

The study contains "Tech Resume 2.0," with resume advice from 27 tech recruiters and hiring decision makers.

Executives locate in Silicon Valley to be near the world's largest pool of high tech talent, to be near their key customers, to enjoy a high quality of life and to have access to capital and great universities. Today's fiscal struggles are threatening many of the Valley's advantages—advantages that are critical to remaining competitive in an area with high labor and housing costs.

According to Jeff Ruster, Executive Director of work2future, the study's recommendations, with insight from the executives who run and make hiring decisions for companies at the heart of Silicon Valley's economic strength are invaluable to the work that his organization does. "The study gives us important insights into how hiring attitudes and practices in the Information & Communications Technology sector have changed and will continue to change, and how work2future, along with our partners in economic development and education, need to develop new strategic partnerships and approaches to enhance our services. Together, we'll ensure that workforce vitality contributes to keeping San Jose-Silicon Valley the world's innovation capital and the key to our nation's economy's success," said Ruster.

Going forward, leaders must find ways to implement an active investment agenda—in the Valley's workforce, infrastructure and communities. "Current success is no guarantee of future success in our increasingly competitive world," said Kris Stadelman, Executive Director of NOVA, one of the Silicon Valley workforce board study sponsors. "Workforce boards, our education partners and Valley companies know we have to work hard to adapt to the changes and challenges identified in the study."

The study recommends that workforce boards must remain aligned with ever shifting local employer skill demands in order provide job seekers with relevant advice on job search and resume strategies. Boards can also establish portfolio learning labs to give laid-off job seekers opportunities to demonstrate their grasp of new technologies and their passion for learning and innovation.

The sponsoring workforce boards provide job training and career development assistance for job seekers, as well as connecting job seekers and local employers. Participating boards include NOVA, based in Sunnyvale, work2future in San Jose and San Mateo County and Santa Cruz County. Green LMI of Massachusetts, BW Research of Carlsbad, CA and CCSCE led a national research team that conducted the eight-month study.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT:

- Stephen Levy, CCSCE, 1-650-321-8550 or slevy@ccsce.com
- Jeff Ruster, work2future, 1-408-535-8176 or jeff.ruster@sanjoseca.gov
- Kris Stadelman, NOVA workforce board executive director, 1-408-730-7233 or kstadelman@novaworks.org
- Phil Jordan, Green LMI, 1-857-919-0774 or phil@greenlmi.com

- Luther Jackson, NOVA, 1-408-730-7832 or 1-408-506-3646 (cell) or ljackson@novaworks.org

(The study will be available at 8 a.m. PDT on Tuesday, July 19. See:
<http://novaworks.org/LaborMarketInfo/Reports/InformationTechnologyStudy.aspx>)